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SUGGESTIONS FOR THE TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT  
OF  
**TETANUS, OR LOCKJAW;**

By HENRY JENNER, M. D. F. L. S.

&c. &c. &c.

*"nec temere nec timide"*

When I reflect on the alarming, and in most cases the fatal termination of Tetanus or Locked-Jaw, I am induced to offer the following observations, with a hope that the treatment I recommend, may relieve the sufferings and eradicate from the constitution the seeds of that afflictive and most dangerous disease.

Various methods of cure have been resorted to by medical gentlemen who rank high in their profession, but their efforts to arrest and stop the progress of the disease, have almost universally proved abortive. With due and general deference to their abilities, I beg to recommend the trial of a mode of treatment, which I venture to do with much confidence, though no opportunity has presented itself since I first gave the disease of Tetanus my serious and particular consideration, of testing my theory by practice.

From the various descriptions given me of cases of Tetanus, the authentic reports published of the almost ever-fatal termination of the disease, and the unsuccessful efforts made use of to relieve the sufferings of the patient, I would strongly recommend with some degree of flattering expectation, that to prevent its fatal results may not only prove possible but even probable, and often restore the afflicted persons, and prevent their becoming victims to premature death.

It was affirmed by that great professional luminary John Hunter, (with whom I for some length of time resided, and was his pupil,) and experience will confirm the correctness of his statement, that two distinct diseases cannot co-exist or go forwards in the same person at one



and the same time. It is this fact which causes the counter-excitement produced by Hydrargyrus upon the constitution, and prevents or stays the action of the morbid syphilitic virus upon it, which in due time becomes completely destroyed and annihilated and the cure of syphilis is effected.

We know that this disease arises from the absorption of its baneful virus into the system, and in like manner the absorption of often spontaneous hydrophobic morbid virus will produce the dreadful disease of canine madness; and I consider Tetanus also in a similar manner imbibing a peculiar formed morbid tetanic infecting virus; and for the destruction of each of these diseases a similar treatment should be adopted; that is, by a counter-excitement or creating in the constitution an opposing action, though the varying symptoms and effects produced by the nature of the different formed poisons may require different management, yet the remedy chiefly to be depended upon I conceive to be by producing and keeping up ptyalism by the use of the Ung. Hydrargyri Fort. Immediately as any suspicion of approaching Tetanus arises or the least symptom of it is perceptible, I would recommend producing ptyalism as speedily as possible by rubbing in Ung. Hydrargyri Fort. on the inside of the arm or thigh, on the side where the injury below arose which caused the disease, and to keep up ptyalism as long as any tetanic symptoms continue, or any suspicion remains of the disease not being entirely subdued, and it might also be advantageous towards preventing or lessening the spasmodic affections of the jaw and throat, &c. to raise a crop of pustular eruptions about the back part of the neck, with the Ung. Antimon. Tartarizat., and administering the following medicines,—

*R. Decoct. Sarasparillæ ʒiij*

———— *Cinchonæ ʒiij*

*Spt. Cinnamomi ʒi* ————— *M. fiat Mistura.*

capiat cyathos viros bis terve quotidie, and the following draught may be given as often as it may be deemed necessary, considerably increasing the quantity of Tinct. Opii as the case may require, and the spasmodic affections indicate, without interfering with keeping up ptyalism, as on



the latter I build my chief hope of the restoration of the patient, regarding the other medicines as incidental auxiliaries,

*R. Tinct. Camphoræ Comp. — 3℥*

*——— Opii gut. xxx*

*Spt. Ætheris Sulph. — 3℥*

*Aq. Puræ — 3℥ ————— M. fiat Haustus.*

It is very astonishing what large doses of Opium may be given in very painful and spasmodic cases, without occasioning any or very little affection of the head, or any constitutional injury; and I think it must be so from the necessity of administering large doses to first subdue the painful spasmodic affections, before its usual effects can be produced in its general administration.

When Tetanus has commenced it appears to me that taking off the limb above the injured part is quite inefficacious, and equally as absurd as it would be to amputate the arm of a person inoculated for the small pox, after the sickening with that complaint has commenced; and it not only has never proved successful, but on the contrary has hastened the fatal termination of Tetanus. The generally adopted idea that Tetanus may arise from a wounded nerve is equally erroneous, and I cannot discover that any advantage was ever derived from dilating the wound and making an incision upon a supposition that relief may be obtained by a complete division of the nerve.

Horses not unfrequently have had the disease of Tetanus or Locked-Jaw, from the pricking of a nail in shoeing, and before that cruel and unnecessary operation of nicking was less in vogue from that cause. I have read an excellent and ingenious treatise on the diseases of horses, by an author of much celebrity, and his mode of healing their complaints. He states his having had the opportunity of attending horses with the disease of Tetanus, and recommends the free opening and cutting down to the bottom of the wound; and if the disease arises from nicking, the taking off the tail above the incisions made by the nicking operation; but he acknowledges that in every case his efforts were unavailing, and the animals died, though opium in large doses, and other generally approved



remedies were had recourse to, which farther indicates that no dependence can be placed on the usual endeavours and treatment yet resorted to in cases of Tetanus.

Although the nervous system has its origin in the brain, and from that source the whole system may become influenced, yet the more distant ramifications I suppose may be affected, without dependence on its becoming at all necessary for the exertion of any of its functions of sensibility, in the spasmodic affections of Tetanus; for the intellects will continue clear and the head not sensibly affected. The same may be observed with respect to various other spasmodic and painful complaints with which a patient may be afflicted.

Reasoning from analogy it may not be irrevalent to the foregoing subject, to observe that the fatal consequences often arising from punctures or cuts on the hands or fingers, from dissecting dead bodies after the process of putrifaction has commenced, or from an occasional abrasion of the cuticle by which the poison may come into immediate contact with the absorbents, might be arrested by the immediate application on the injured parts of a little Aq. Ammonia Pura with a feather, and if afterwards the poison should be supposed not to have been destroyed, then to have recourse to the speedy and free use of mercurial friction on the arm, and the inoculated virus perhaps be thus rendered neutral by the production of ptyalism.

The natives of Africa and many of those of the East, poisoned their arrows by dipping them in putrid human flesh, and not generally as some imagined by using the poison of venomous serpents for that purpose. There is every reason to believe the death of King Richard the First, was caused by a wound inflicted by a poisoned arrow on the shoulder, though some authors ascribe his death to the unskilfulness of the surgeon in removing the arrow from the wound, and thereby producing mortification.

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